

Message Text

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TAGS: OEXC, UR

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE OBSTACLES TO NEW EXCHANGES

STATE FOR EUR/SOV

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REF: MOSCOW 13191

1. DURING THREE RECENT MEETINGS WITH EMBASSY STAFF AND OFFICIAL VISITORS MFA CULTURAL DIVISION HAS EMPHASIZED NEED FOR PROGRESS ON TWO LONGSTANDING PROBLEMS: CIRCULATION OF SOVIET LIFE MAGAZINE AND SALES OF SOVIET FILMS. IN TALK WITH LEONARD MARKS, CHAIRMAN, U.S. ADVISORY COMMISSION ON INT'L EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE, DIVISION CHIEF VOLSKIY WENT SO FAR AS TO HINT THAT PROGRESS ON THESE MATTERS MIGHT BE LINKED TO NEW EXCHANGE PROPOSALS US WISHES TO ADVANCE.

2. SOVIETS CLAIM 14,000 RETURNS ON SOVIET LIFE, BUT ARE NOT INFORMED ON WHETHER EARLIER US SUGGESTIONS, E.G. CONSULTATIONS WITH NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE HAVE BEEN ADOPTED. SINCE GESTURE FROM US SIDE WOULD BE USEFUL BEFORE DECEMBER REVIEW TALKS, SUGGEST DEPT/USIA ENCOURAGE EARLY MEETING BETWEEN APPROPRIATE PERSONS FROM TWO MAGAZINES AND ALSO CONSIDER WHAT OTHER STEPS MIGHT BE TAKEN TO ASSIST SOVIETS. CONSULTATIONS WITH CHARLES MILL, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN BUSINESS PRESS, WHO HAS JUST COMPLETED SUCCESSFUL SPECIALIST PROGRAM IN USSR, ALSO MIGHT LEAD TO HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS.

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3. SOVIETS CONTINUE TO EXPRESS INTENSE INTEREST IN OPENING SOVIET EXPORT FILM OFFICE IN NEW YORK. WE UNDERSTAND PROBLEMS THIS PRESENTS AND CONSIDER APPROVAL UNWISE. HOWEVER, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO EXPLORE POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES WHICH WOULD DEMONSTRATE COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD DISTRIBUTION OF SOVIET FILMS IN US. FOR EXAMPLE, WE MIGHT SUGGEST THAT A SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE VISIT SELECTED CITIES PERIODICALLY TO HOLD SHOWING OF FILMS SOVIETS WISH TO PLACE ON US CIRCUIT. SHOWINGS COULD BE FOR SMALL GROUPS OF FILM SPECIALISTS AND EXECUTIVES OR LARGER INVITED AUDIENCES. PROPOSAL MIGHT INCLUDE RECIPROCAL CLAUSE FOR AMERICANS TO DO SAME IN USSR. EXPENSES AND ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BE RESPONSIBILITY OF SENDING SIDE.

4. WE HAVE REQUESTED SOVIET LIST OF PAST US AND SOVIET FILM SALES SEVERAL TIMES, BUT THEY HAVE NOT YET PROVIDED.

5. DEPT/USIA VIEWS ARE REQUESTED ON THESE AND ANY OTHER SUGGESTIONS TO SHOW MOVEMENT ON TWO ISSUES.
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